

Scoping comments for the GPT project

I live and work in Bellingham, WA and believe that in our highly interconnected world, the scoping for the EIS for the GPT project should include the health, economic, and environmental effects, including cumulative effects, for the complete process of extraction, transportation and burning of the coal in question all the way from Wyoming to the combustion sites in China, and include the cumulative health, economic and environmental effects of this entire process on the planet generally, including the effect on global climate change.

Specific questions to be addressed:

Extraction process (Wyoming and/or?)

- What are the health risks (and resulting economic costs) of the breathing of coal dust by both the miners of the coal and those living in close proximity of the mines? How many premature deaths will this create? What is the economic cost of this?
- what are the safety risks (and associated economic costs) of the miners who are mining the coal?
- what cumulative levels of air and water pollution (including the water table) will result because of this project?
- What is the total amount of carbon released into the atmosphere by the extraction process over ten years, twenty years? What is the effect of this on global climate change?

Transportation process-rail

- What is the total population of people living within 1000 feet of the entire rail corridor? 3000 feet? 10,000 feet?
- How many of these people have asthma or other respiratory illnesses?
- How much coal dust will be released within this 1000 feet along the entire corridor?

- What negative health effects will result to these people with respiratory illnesses over 10 years and 20 years and what is the economic cost involved? What number of premature deaths will occur?
- What other health, environmental and economic costs will result along these corridors due to the GPT project?
- What amount of fuel will be burned in the entire process of transportation along the entire corridor?
- What is the total amount of carbon released into the atmosphere by the transportation process? Over ten years? Over twenty years?
- What will be the effect on global climate change by this release of burned fuel?
- What is the total amount of decreased property value for those property owners within 10,000 feet along the entire rail corridor caused by the increase in rail traffic, coal dust released, added noise, and added fuel burning pollution?
- What is the total cost to states, counties and local municipalities for required upgrades to the road and traffic infrastructures, such as added/improved crossings, increased/upgraded rail spurs, traffic diversions, etc. caused by the increased rail traffic, along the entire rail corridor, by the GPT project?
- What safety risks will be increased for drivers, riders and pedestrians along the entire rail corridor, and what are the resulting costs, caused by the increased rail traffic by the GPT project?
- What is the total cost to commercial operations along the entire rail corridor as a result of traffic delays caused by the increased rail traffic?
- what is the economic effect on tourism, along the entire rail corridor, caused by the increased rail traffic and its effects, including traffic delays, noise and air pollution, etc.?
- With regard to the Asian ground transportation corridor, what are the risks, impacts and associated costs, as delineated above that would apply?

Transportation process-marine

- What species of marine life inhabit or transit the area within 1000 feet, 3000 feet, and 10,000 feet of the marine terminal. Which of these species are endangered, threatened or otherwise protected?

-What are the realistically expected levels of toxic materials likely and potentially to be released into the above defined areas by the project? What will the effect be on the protected species within those areas? And within a ten mile radius?

-What species within the above areas are part of the food chain of other nearby protected species?

-What will be the effect of the project on nearby commercial fishing operations? Nearby sportfishing operations?

-What will be the effect on the commercial fishing and sportfishing operations caused by the increased ship traffic? What will be the effect on the tourist boating industry?

-Given the size, number and maneuverability issues of the larger ships involved in the project, what is the risk of collision involving these ships within the inland waters? What is the risk of fuel or cargo spills caused by a collision?

-What is the risk of a catastrophic spill of fuel or cargo caused by collision or grounding of these ships within the inland waters?

-What would be the environmental impact of various size spills, including a catastrophic spill, within these waters? What would be the total economic cost of such spills, including long term costs to the fishing and boating and tourist industries.

-What is the risk and associated economic cost of new exotic/invasive species being introduced into the local ecosystem by these ships?

-How much and what quality of fuel will be burned and how much carbon released into the atmosphere by these ships, both locally and along the entire marine corridor? What is the effect of this on global climate change?

-How much particulate matter and other harmful to health products will be released by these ships within the inland waters? What are the associated costs of increased health issues caused by this?

-What are the risks, environmental and economic, of accident/collision/grounding, etc. of these ships in other constricted waters along the entire corridor, including through the Aleutian chain of islands?

-With regard to the Asian local waters near the terminus of the marine corridor, what are the risks, impacts and associated costs, as delineated above, that would apply?

Asian combustion process

-What are the various combustion processes used by the final customers of the coal involved in the GPT project?

-What are the efficiencies and pollution levels emitted by these processes?

-What are the environmental, health and economic effects and costs associated with combusting this coal in the local and regional Asian area?

-What is the total and cumulative amount of carbon that will be released into the atmosphere by the combustion of this coal and what effect will it have on global climate change? Over ten years? Twenty years? 50 years?

-What amount of particulate and other pollutants associated with the transportation and combustion of this coal will travel to, and be deposited in, North America? What is the health effect and associated costs of these pollutants?

-What amount of the mercury found in Lake Whatcom (Bellingham drinking water supply) comes from Asian coal combustion? What additional amount of mercury in the water supply will result from GPT coal in ten years? Twenty years? 50 years?

Along the same vein as these questions, what other regional and global effects will be the result of the GPT project?

Please proceed with extreme caution with the GPT EIS to make sure these questions, and other associated questions are answered.

Thank You

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